through a food shortage her population refused to go on with the War. As to France, M. Clementel had announced his intention of going back to France to hand in his resignation if nothing satisfactory were settled by the end of the week.

Problems

The difficulty was of course primarily one of tonnage. There were so many urgent demands upon our shipping, including demands by our Allies for munitions and coal, that it was a question how we could maintain our other vitally important commitments in the teeth of the growing shipping shortage, and at the same time increase food imports for the benefit of our Allies. The whole matter hinged on the general military policy, and we considered that we could come to no decision till this, and the general shipping situation in the light of it, had been reviewed. Eventually we decided that:—

(a) For the next two months certain wheat ships should be diverted from the United Kingdom to France and Italy, these Governments being informed by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of our action in the matter.

(V) The President of the Board of Trade and the Shipping Controller should prepare a statement as to the shipping situation generally and its adequacy to meet the demands of the Allies.

In order to reassure M. Clementel, an agreement was entered into whereby we expressed

our readiness
Responsibility to view the responsibility for the food
assumed for supplies of France and Italy as being a
feeding France common charge on all the Allies, includ-
and Italy

Cabinet meeting of 6th November, Lord Robert Cecil